



# Michigan Council of Teachers of English

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## Statement on Endorsement of Bias Review

**BACKGROUND:** Following a meeting at which it reviewed the process for setting the scores on the High School Proficiency Tests and examined the performance of students on these tests, the Bias Review Committee of the Michigan Department of Education prepared the statement below. The statement was read into the minutes of the meeting of the Michigan State Board of Education on July 24, 1996.

The Michigan Council of Teachers of English endorses the statement of the Michigan Department of Education Bias Review Committee as it appears below.

The projected access to state endorsed diplomas for Michigan's ethnic minority students resulting from instructional practices currently in place is dismal. Therefore, we recommend that the State Board exert its influence and utilize its resources to promote programs and practices likely to narrow the achievement gap for ethnic minority and culturally distinct students. Means of doing so would include:

- Requiring staff development to improve content knowledge and delivery
- Coordinating through collaboration on instructional, curricular and assessment initiatives and programs
- Recruiting ethnic minorities and culturally distinct peoples into teaching
- Providing on-going support to Michigan's linguistically and culturally distinct students by insuring funding, personnel and targeted initiatives to ensure equal access to learning
- Integrating cultural and gender education within all aspects of individual instructional modes, content, and issues in all curriculum
- Fostering high expectations for students, teachers, and administrators
- Providing for variant learning styles and multiple intelligences
- Requiring staff development to assist all educators to recognize and eliminate embedded cultural and gender biases in classroom instruction and materials
- Providing monetary incentives for buildings and districts which demonstrate improved academic achievement
- Identifying programs which demonstrate sustained success in narrowing the achievement gap
- Making available on-going grants, technical assistance and support to schools and districts for implementing programs which demonstrate sustained success in narrowing the achievement gap

We, the members of the Bias Review Committee, are individually and collectively committed to ensuring the academic achievement of ethnic minorities and culturally distinct groups. We ask

you to join us in informing and inspiring the educational community and the public to assure our state a productive citizenry contributed to by all people.